

CLAIMS

1. A method for navigating user interface elements, the method comprising:

grouping user interface elements of a user interface of a computer program application into groups based on a hierarchical arrangement of the user interface elements, the hierarchical arrangement allowing for sibling groups and parent groups; and

detecting a navigation key press of a sibling navigation key or a parent navigation key, and if the navigation key is a sibling navigation key, shifting input focus to a next sibling group in the hierarchy, and if the navigation key is a parent navigation key, shifting input focus to a parent group in the hierarchy.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

creating one or more hierarchical tab chains to contain all user interface controls currently displayed by the application, wherein each user interface control is contained in a container, all user interface controls are arranged in a tab chain hierarchy according to an arrangement of the containers that contain the controls, each container is represented as a node in the tab chain hierarchy, and a separate tab chain is created for each container.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein:

creating a new view creates a view container that contains all the user interface controls for the new view; and

the hierarchical tab chain for the new view is added to the existing tab chain by adding a new node for the new view container in the existing hierarchical tab chain.

4. A computer implemented method for navigating editable cells of a table, the method comprising:

detecting a navigation key press of a forward navigation key or a backward navigation key;

if the navigation key is a forward navigation key, shifting input focus to a next editable cell of the table; and

if the navigation key is a backward navigation key, shifting input focus to a previous editable cell of the table.

5. The method of claim 4, further comprising:

switching the editable cell to the edit mode, if a switch-cell-mode key is pressed while an editable cell currently having input focus is not in an edit mode;

wherein user input modifies content of the editable cell, if the editable cell is in the edit mode.

6. The method of claim 5, further comprising:

switching the editable cell to a focus mode, in which the content of the editable cell cannot be modified, if a switch-cell-mode key is pressed while the editable cell currently having input focus is in the edit mode.

7. A computer program product, tangibly embodied on an information carrier, comprising instructions operable to cause data processing apparatus to:

group user interface elements of a user interface of a computer program application into groups based on a hierarchical arrangement of the user interface elements, the hierarchical arrangement allowing for sibling groups and parent groups; and

detect a navigation key press of a sibling navigation key or a parent navigation key, and if the navigation key is a sibling navigation key, shift input focus to a next sibling group in the hierarchy, and if the navigation key is a parent navigation key, shift input focus to a parent group in the hierarchy.

8. The product of claim 7, further comprising instructions to:

create one or more hierarchical tab chains to contain all user interface controls currently displayed by the application, wherein each user interface control is contained in a container, all user interface controls are arranged in a tab chain hierarchy according to an arrangement of the containers that contain the controls, each container is represented as a node in the tab chain hierarchy, and a separate tab chain is created for each container.

9. The product of claim 8, wherein:

creating a new view for the application creates a view container that contains all the user interface controls for the new view; and

the hierarchical tab chain for the new view is added to the existing tab chain by adding a new node for the new view container in the existing hierarchical tab chain.

10. A computer program product, tangibly embodied on an information carrier, for navigating editable cells of a table, the product comprising instructions operable to cause data processing apparatus to:

detect a navigation key press of a forward navigation key or a backward navigation key;

if the navigation key is a forward navigation key, shift input focus to a next editable cell of the table; and

if the navigation key is a backward navigation key, shift input focus to a previous editable cell of the table.

11. The method of claim 10, further comprising instructions to:

switch the editable cell to the edit mode if a switch-cell-mode key is pressed while an editable cell currently having input focus is not in an edit mode;

wherein user input modifies content of the editable cell, if the editable cell is in the edit mode.

12. The method of claim 11, further comprising instructions to:

switch the editable cell to a focus mode, in which the content of the editable cell cannot be modified, if a switch-cell-mode key is pressed while the editable cell currently having input focus is in the edit mode.

13. A system comprising:

means for grouping user interface elements of a user interface of a computer program application into groups based on a hierarchical arrangement of the user interface elements, the hierarchical arrangement allowing for sibling groups and parent groups; and

5 detecting a navigation key press of a sibling navigation key or a parent navigation key, and if the navigation key is a sibling navigation key, shifting input focus to a next sibling group in the hierarchy, and if the navigation key is a parent navigation key, shifting input focus to a parent group in the hierarchy.

14. The system of claim 13, further comprising:

10 means for creating one or more hierarchical tab chains to contain all user interface controls currently displayed by the application, wherein each user interface control is contained in a container, all user interface controls are arranged in a tab chain hierarchy according to an arrangement of the containers that contain the controls, each container is represented as a node in the tab chain hierarchy, and a separate tab chain is created for each
15 container.

15. The system of claim 14, wherein:

creating a new view creates a view container that contains all the user interface controls for the new view; and

the hierarchical tab chain for the new view is added to the existing tab chain by
20 adding a new node for the new view container in the existing hierarchical tab chain.